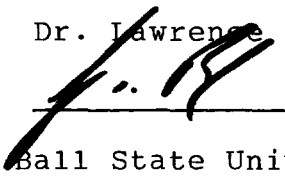
"Tranquility Tinged with Terror:" The Presence of the Sublime in "Project for a Cenotaph to Newton," The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, and the Symphonie Fantastique

An Honors Thesis (HONORS 499)

by

Christena J. Naragon

Dr. Lawrence Birken



Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

May, 1991

4 May, 1991

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

I would like to thank Dr. Lawrence Birken, Ms. Patricia Conners Robertson, Dr. Thomas Thornburg, and Dr. Edward Wolner for their guidance and expertise in their respective areas.

What quality of art truly affects individuals? According to Edmund Burke, eighteenth century historian and philosopher, it is the sublime, the terrible, the awe-inspiring. In 1759, he delineated the sublime aesthetic in his work A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. Burke described the sublime by saying that

> . . . whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime, that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. (58 emphasis Burke's)

Because the sublime produces such strong emotions, it is an effective means for artists who wish to elicit powerful feelings from their audiences. To be sublime, a work must have one or more of several qualities defined by Burke which evoke the requisite terrible passions in the one who observes it. Some of these qualities are obscurity, power, size, infinity, and specific uses of light and sound.

One early work which could be considered sublime is Etienne-Louis Boullée's visionary "Project for a Cenotaph to Newton," which was drawn in 1784. The vast sphere of the "Cenotaph" was never built (it would not have been possible with the technology of the 1780's), but it survives as a series of drawings (Appendix A). From these drawings, it seems sublime in its vastness of scale, use of light and shadow, and in the

limitlessness of the universe it was designed to represent. This aesthetic is also present in Victor Hugo's 1831 work, The Hunchback of Notre-Dame. This story tells of the passions La Esmeralda inspires in four men: Pierre Gringoire, Claude Frollo, Quasimodo, and Captain Phoebus. The terror created by the Hunchback himself, the qualities of light and shadow in the cathedral and its magnificence, and the seeming infinity of its columns come together to form an awe-inspiring and terrifying vision. Hector Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique was also written in 1831 and shows signs of of the sublime. This five-movement symphony is paired with a program written by Berlioz which tells the story of a young man filled with passion. In a drug-induced sleep, he dreams that he kills his beloved, is executed and observes a witches' sabbath. This piece shows that the sublime need not be visual; it creates terrifying passions in the dark tone color and powerful feeling effected by the use of low instruments and sudden changes in dynamics. Parts of the program, especially the execution and witches' sabbath, are quite terrifying. The sublime characteristics of these works are often peculiar to the means of expression; however, the presence of the sublime unifies them across disciplines and through time.

The validity of a study that compares three different art forms which span almost fifty years may be doubtful to some, but I believe it is valid. Although humanity has been using the sublime, consciously or unconsciously, since its first desire to astonish its contemporaries, this aesthetic simply has not always been a prevalent mode of expression. In this instance, the

presence of the sublime serves as a link. All three artists sought to touch their audiences in what Burke considered the deepest manner, by threatening their own sense of their safety. In Boullée, it is an artist's reaction to the unstable time just before the French Revolution. Berlioz and Hugo responded to the aftermath of the Revolution and Napoleon. The decade of the 1820's was also unstable and culminated in a revolt in Paris in 1830. The sublime rose to prominence when the society at large was unstable.

The sublime experience occurs when terrible objects create in those who observe them a "state of the soul, in which all of its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror" (Burke 95). These objects frighten their observers to the point that they cannot respond. G. Richard Thompson draws on Ann Radcliff to define the complementary nature of terror and horror in his introduction to Romantic Gothic Tales. He defines terror as a physical and mental fear of pain and death from without (6). This is similar to Burke's principle which defines fear as "an apprehension of pain or death" operating "in a manner that resembles actual pain" and preventing the individual from reasoning (96). Horror, according to Thompson, is a sense from within of something evil or morally repellent (6). Radcliff states that terror causes horror which "contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates" the faculties (qtd. in Thompson 7). Burke is concerned with the freezing of the faculties. This inability to act or reason is the reaction to fear which he considered the most powerful of the passions because it is concerned with "the

preservation of the individual" and "turn[s] chiefly on pain and danger" (emphasis Burke's 58). Terror creates horror which freezes an individual's ability to respond. Seeing the absolutely abhorrent in the world makes one aware of the dark side within oneself. This realization may be so shocking as to halt all abilities of the mind and body.

Those who have considered the sublime insist that the pain and danger must not be too real. When they are modified so that the individual's life is not immediately at stake, Burke feels that the passions that initially cause one to fear for one's life turn into a sort of delight; "not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror, a sort of tranquility tinged with terror" (257). It is necessary that the individuals not actually be in danger if they are to experience the sublime. According to Emmanuel Kant, if they are in danger, they will have to flee, and will not experience the sublime moment (qtd. in Weiskel 84). The distance is requisite for the pleasure.

One does not often encounter "tranquility tinged with terror." For this reason, Burke maintains that through sympathy one can experience the passions of another (70). According to Burke, this is how "poetry, painting, and other affecting arts transfuse their passions from one breast to another" (71). Thus, everyone who observes Boullée's drawings for the "Cenotaph" can imagine themselves at the base of the sphere even though it is impossible to experience the "Cenotaph" directly. The listeners can imagine themselves being marched to the scaffold or observing the witches' sabbath in the Symphonie Fantastique, and the

readers can feel as if they are part of the crowds that surround Quasimodo in awe of his deformity and strength. Mary K. Patterson Thornburg also touches on the subject of sympathy when she remarks that it is the "lack of dependable distance" that makes Gothic characters (or their sublime counterparts) frightening. The readers identify with the sentimental characters who are threatened by the Gothic character (40). Readers take the place of the characters they identify with and feel threatened when the characters are. In this manner the experience of reading the work is "analogous to terror." The individuals are not actually in danger, but because they sympathize with the characters who are, they respond as if they were.

Slightly different from sympathy is Burke's contention that humans delight in the "real misfortunes and pains of others" (72). This point is rather well proven in The Hunchback. Huge crowds show up for every execution or flogging. Hugo reports that the crowd would "wait whole hours for public executions," and were rather patient as they waited for Quasimodo to be whipped (176). Also, a similarly large crowd gathered for La Esmeralda's execution (Hugo 277). The crowds did not care if the sentence was deserved or just, they just wanted to see someone punished.

In the "Project for a Cenotaph to Newton," The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, and the Symphonie Fantastique, the artists invoke the observers' sympathies and combine them with distinct qualities to illicit the sublime reaction. For example, the very idea behind

the "Cenotaph", that of a vast spheroid representation of the universe in which to honor the man who defined its basic laws, is sublime. Boullée was struck by the power of Newton's genius and said of it:

> O Newton! if by the range of your vision and the sublimity of your Genius, you have determined the shape of the earth, for my part I have conceived a project to envelope you with your discovery. (qtd. in Braham 116)

To enshrine Newton, Boullée chose a sphere to represent the earth itself and pierced the shell with holes so that it formed a planetarium inside (Braham 116). All of the sublime qualities that Boullée puts in the "Cenotaph" are present in the universe that is being represented. The universe is perceived as being dark and measureless in size. It actually is infinite and can easily make a spectator feel lost within it. For Boullée, the sublime meant the ultimate in beauty. However, he was also inspired by Burke, and he considered the terrific and the awe-inspiring part of this beauty (De Montclos 42). Burke never specifically refers to intellectual capacity as a quality of the sublime, but he does say that the sublime "abhors mediocrity" (147). Boullée is definitely lauding what he perceives as the extreme of intelligence in genius by designing a cenotaph to memorialize Newton. This respect for Newton ties Boullée to his Romantic counterparts, Hugo and Berlioz, who admired "energy, moral enthusiansm and original genius" along with the other romantics of their era (Barzun, Classic 15).

An important quality of the sublime is obscurity, to which

all others contribute. Burke says this is necessary for the sublime because "when we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accustom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes" (99). Modern day experience confirms this. What the senses cannot detect, the imagination fills in and the imagination often produces the worst possible scenario. The power of the imagination is why many young children (and adults) are afraid of the dark. It deprives them of their primary sense of sight and, therefore, they do not know what is happening around them. Darkness is obscure, and as a result, it is sublime. Obscurity is also part of the aura of fear that surrounds Quasimodo. All that is known about him is that he is ugly and strong. He was left outside of Notre-Dame as a foundling when he was young. His deformed shape led the women around him to call him "a misshapen ape" and a "monster" (Hugo 128). The fact that the Hunchback is deaf and dumb and cannot communicate with the rest of the world only adds to the general fear of him. He cannot understand the community's intentions or communicate his own and the resultant misunderstandings lead to fear. Infinity and size, as present in the "Cenotaph" and the cathedral of Notre-Dame, also prevents observers from knowing the full extent of what is before them. Newton's greatness of intellect is sublime because we cannot fully comprehend genius. All that is obscure is sublime because humans naturally fear what they do not know.

Light is a major component of obscurity and a factor of the sublime because it determines how much can be seen. Burke feels

that it is necessary for the quality of light within a building to be as different as possible from the light outside in order to properly move the passions. For this reason, the interior of buildings should be dark during the day and light at night (Burke 147-48). The "Cenotaph" acts as a planetarium by day with tiny holes, which would seem to be stars, allowing light into the giant sphere, and as a planetarium, it is necessarily dark (Trachtenberg 422). At night, the "Cenotaph" was to be lighted with a tremendous light to represent the sun. Such a light would be in great contrast to the darkness outside and fits with Burke's sublime qualities. He says that "such a light as that of the sun, immediately exerted on the eye, as it overpowers the sense, is a very great idea" (144). The ability of this "sun" to overpower would be increased because of the contrast with the night outside. It would be like stepping from a darkened theatre into the afternoon sun, which is always an overwhelming experience.

Often, Hugo describes the cathedral of Notre-Dame in terms of light. This description gives sublime characteristics to the church. The most striking instance of sublime contrast between interior and exterior that Hugo describes is on the day of La Esmeralda's intended execution. When Claude Frollo comes out to hear La Esmeralda's last confession, the doors open to expose the "vast, gloomy," and "dimly lighted" church, which seems like a cavern compared with the Place du Parvis which is "resplendent with the glorious sunshine" (280). Hugo associates this sublime contrast with an upcoming death. The genuine fear of death

combines with the terror of the dark interior of the cathedral to frighten the readers as they sympathize with La Esmeralda. Hugo also uses this sublime contrast when the sun sets after La Esmeralda is called to dance in the house of Fleur-de-Lys. The Archdeacon finds the cathedral "dark and deserted," but the rose window is "lit up by a ray of the setting sun [and glistening] in the dark like a cluster of diamonds" (199). This light would be as great a shock to the eye in a darkened church as passing from an area of great light to one of darkness would be, even though it is only the eye which is moving.

Though contrast is important to the sublime, Burke says that darkness has a greater effect on the passions than light, and that the most sublime buildings should be as dark as possible (147). Hugo makes Notre-Dame very sublime because it is almost always portrayed as dark and gloomy. Only once does he tell the reader that the church "was resplendent with light and rang with the pealing of organs and bells" (256). Instead, Hugo repeatedly speaks of the "dark and Massive" towers which aid the façade's ability to strike "terror into the spectator" (98-99). In this instance, Hugo recognizes the potential of sublime qualities to affect the passions. The night that Claude Frollo believes that La Esmeralda has been hanged he finds the church "dark and silent as the grave" (294). This image links that darkness to a direct cause of the sublime, the fear of death. On the night that the rabble of the Cour des Miracles attacks Notre-Dame, Hugo describes the church as dark and solitary, and notes how the towers stand out in black relief from the glow of the Parvis

(386-87). As always, the cathedral is portrayed in black, and its darkness is reinforced by the glow from behind. This contrast makes the cathedral even more sublime.

Boullée also explored darkness in the rendering of the views of the "Cenotaph." These renderings are very important because they are the only possible way to experience the "Cenotaph." In the day view, the darkness of the interior of the sphere is striking. In the night view, the background is very dark. In the exterior view, the shadowing of the great sphere is a prominent feature (Trachtenberg 422). Boullée considered himself the inventor of the architecture of shadows, which Villar, Boullée's biographer, described as "the art of organizing the masses of buildings, in such a way that their projections and the contrast of their forms produced effects of lighting the most calculated to enchant the view" (qtd. in Braham). In the case of the "Cenotaph" these shadowy calculated effects gave it many sublime qualities.

Burke says that "greatness of dimension seems requisite" for a building to be sublime (136). Vast size may be the most overwhelmingly sublime quality of Boullée's "Cenotaph." From measurements based on the accompanying plates, the approximate diameter of the sphere would be 350 feet. According to Jean-Marie De Montclos, the sphere depicted would enclose a space so immense that the sarcophagus intended to enshrine Newton would be lost (38). A spectator within the "Cenotaph" would have only the sarcophagus to use as a point of reference, and "he may well believe himself in a great open plain or on the high sea" (De

Montclos 39). It is necessary to sympathize with the small characters that represent human beings within the great shrine in order to experience this sublime, but this should not be too difficult. The feeling of being lost in such a great space coupled with the intense light or dark would incite feelings of terror and make the "Cenotaph" a sublime space.

The great size of the cathedral of Notre-Dame adds to its sublimity. This effect is often combined with the use of light, as when the spectators see "down the whole length of the church" into the dark on the day La Esmeralda was scheduled to be hanged (Hugo 280). The massiveness of the towers is emphasized along with their darkness (Hugo 98). It is the vastness of the façade that for centuries has "struck terror into the spectator," just as Burke claims size has the ability to do (Hugo 99). Burke also says that it is more powerful to look down from a precipice than to look up at a great height (Burke 127). This phenomenon is experienced in The Hunchback. Hugo remarks that looking down from the towers did not produce vertigo or any sort of fright in Quasimodo (136). This statement implies that it did in others. This description comments not only on the powerful height of the towers of the church, but also on Quasimodo's strength.

According to Burke, Infinity is another sublime quality (129). He says that objects need not be truly infinite, but through "succession and uniformity of parts" an artificial infinity can be created (132). Boullée represents the artificially infinite by the rows of trees that surround the "Cenotaph" like columns in the exterior rendering. Their

repetition and identity give the impression that the row goes on forever. However, this effect could not be experienced from the entrance view because the row of trees does not continue on this façade. The cornice trim caps the base in an almost unbroken pattern. Because this repetition seems infinite, it is sublime. The base appears to be of masonry which would create a repetitive pattern and a feeling of the infinite on that level. The "Cenotaph" has something of the truly infinite as well. The heavens that the planetarium represents are unending. Also, there is something infinite about a sphere, which has no seams or ends. It is shape which definitely appears endless, especially at such a large scale. To imagine oneself inside it is to imagine stepping into the heavens themselves.

The church of Notre-Dame also has something of the artificially infinite in the repetition of the columns that support the vaulted roof. The columns advance themselves in two repetitious rows to the altar of the church. Another instance of the seemingly infinite appears when La Esmeralda is in jail. Water is steadily dripping in her dungeon. She tries to count the drops and keep track of time; however, this attempt leaves her in a stupor because of its apparent limitlessness (Hugo 257). This stupor is similar to the overwhelming of the soul that is a result of the sublime in Burke's opinion.

It is possible to experience terror in ways other than visual. In his essay "On Imitation in Music," Berlioz says that it is possible "to arouse in us by means of sound the notion of the several passions of the heart, and to awaken solely through

the sense of hearing the impressions that human beings experience only through the other senses" (43). Burke agrees that "sounds have a great power" and that "excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terror" (151). Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique is one work which is capable of arousing such terrible passions with sound. Berlioz uses "excessive loudness" or sudden dynamic shifts in much of the symphony, especially the fourth and fifth movements. He explores the whole range of dynamics from pianississimo (ppp) to fortississimo (fff). This reflects the sublime abhorrence of mediocrity as it explores more of the dynamic spectrum than was common previously. Berlioz's instrumentation could also be considered sublime because his orchestra was so large (Kerman 268). At the opening of the fourth movement, Berlioz crescendos from piano (p) to fortissimo (ff) in the space of two measures (mms. 15-16) (Appendix B). Berlioz tries to overwhelm the listeners with sound by having the winds (which are larger than normal) play the main theme forte (f) (mms. 62-77). The most sublime use of dynamics is as the persona approaches the scaffold. Berlioz again moves from pianissimo (pp) in m. 159 to fortissimo (ff) in m. 160. The orchestra then fades out until only the E♭ clarinet is playing the idée fixe, the theme which represents his beloved. The theme is interrupted when the orchestra answers fortissimo (ff) at m. 169 and, after a beat of nearly complete silence, continues at that dynamic level until the end of the movement. These sudden changes in dynamics support and reinforce the terrific program

that accompanies the movement. The persona sees himself marched to the scaffold and beheaded. The chop of the axe is mentioned in the program. It is the "fatal blow" that cuts of the idée fixe (Berlioz 25). The axe chop terrifies the hearers by its contrast to the dynamic levels which surround it. It interrupts the idée fixe at fortissimo (ff) for one beat and then drops off in silence. The dynamic changes shock and overwhelm the senses just as the fright of moving to the scaffold and being beheaded would.

The fifth movement uses dynamics in a similar manner, especially from m. 414 on when the Dies irae and the Witches' Round Dance are combined. This is for the most part a loud and powerful section of the piece. It continues to overwhelm the listeners until the end of the movement, and leaves them relieved to be out of the tension associated with the music and the program of the witches' sabbath. On the opposite end of the scale, Burke also says that "a low, tremulous, intermitting sound" is also productive of the sublime (153). Berlioz creates this effect by instructing the strings to play with the wood of their bows in the fifth movement from m. 444 to m. 459. This is an example of the sublime abhoring mediocrity, sounds should be very loud or very soft. Also, the low, tremulous sound is indefinite, obscure, and therefore more terrifying.

Many critics, although not analyzing the symphony with Burke in mind, have made comments that attest to its sublime aspects. Richard Wagner imagined lightning and flames when he heard Berlioz's piece. To him everything was "monstrous, bold, but

endlessly painful" (286). This connects with two aspects that Burke considered. "Monstrous" is huge and also frightening. "Painful" deals directly with Burke's declaration that the most powerful passions are those created by pain and danger.

According to Robert Schumann, the ability of music to instill terror in the listener is present from the first movement of the symphony. Even the language that he uses when describing the work portrays the sublime. He recounts how the "shadowy outlines" of the main theme come to life (230). The reference to "shadowy" relates to Burke's idea of dark or obscure images, and the terror of the unknown. Schumann's description suggests something of the obscurity of sound, which, in turn, would be terrifying and sublime. He then describes how the theme builds into a "terrifying splendor" near the end of the first movement (230). This heart-stopping terror is what Burke considered sublime.

Specific types of sounds may inspire terror in those who hear them. Burke says that "the noise of vast cataracts, raging storms, thunder, or artillery, awakes a great and aweful [sic] sensation in the mind" (151). Berlioz uses this reaction at the end of the third movement, "Scene in the Meadows" (Adagio). As a lone English horn plays, the kettle drums roll in with a credible imitation of thunder. In the program, Berlioz touches on several aspects of the sublime when he comments about the final measures of this movement. He speaks of "distant sound of thunder--loneliness--silence" (qtd. in Cone, "The Symphony" 25). The thunder brings about the terror associated with the potential destructive power of that natural phenomenon.

The loneliness and silence relate to another producer of the sublime, privations. "All general privations are great, because they are all terrible" according to Burke (125). He considered solitude and silence two of these privations. The solitary piper facing a storm at the end of the third movement sets the sublime tone for the rest of the piece. These privations are also present in The Hunchback. The Hunchback has been affected by the loud sounds of the bells that he rings. The power of their volume made him deaf and subsequently dumb. However, their power is the only sound loud enough to penetrate his deafness. This privation "shut out the only ray of light and joy that still reached his soul, which was now wrapped in profound darkness" (Hugo 136). Notice that another element of the sublime, darkness, is used to describe the effects of silence on the Hunchback. Burke also cites solitude as a source of pain (68). Both Quasimodo and La Esmeralda experience this pain in The Hunchback. Quasimodo is isolated because of his deafness, dumbness, and imposing strength. La Esmeralda's isolation is more purely physical than Quasimodo's. When he rescues her, he takes her to a small chamber in the upper reaches of the cathedral. She cannot leave it, and therefore cannot talk with anyone besides the bell-ringer if she wishes to avoid being hanged. Her enforced loneliness is even more painful because of her normal gregariousness and her love for the Captain, whom she can see courting the young woman across the plaza.

The program for the fourth movement of the symphony sets the sublime tone for the music which will follow. The persona in the

program dreams that he has killed his beloved, been condemned, and is being led to execution. Berlioz goes on to describe a "march that is now sombre and fierce, now Brilliant and solemn" (qtd. in Cone, "The Symphony" 25). Berlioz was intent on moving his listeners in a powerful manner, and so he used terror when he was writing this movement. After hearing the rehearsal of the piece, he remarked that "the March to Execution is fifty times more terrifying than I expected" (qtd. in Barzun, Berlioz 48). Through this terror, Berlioz was able to touch his audience more effectively than by pure manipulation of the intellect. Franz Liszt marveled at Berlioz's adeptness in depicting "the terrors of an execution" (284). These terrors are great because they deal with self-preservation and by sympathy the listeners begin to fear for their own lives. The same terrors are present in The Hunchback as La Esmeralda first tries to flee her execution, and is then captured and hanged. When Quasimodo looks up to see the figure of the girl dangling from the noose, the readers are affected not only by the fear of their own deaths, but also by the loneliness that the Hunchback feels. He sees La Esmeralda hanged and Claude Frollo motionless after his fall and remarks, "There is all I ever loved" (Hugo 421).

Berlioz entitles the fifth movement "Dreams of a Witches' Sabbath" and its program sets the sublime mood. A host of ghosts, witches and monsters celebrating the Sabbath is quite a terrifying image. Also, the Dies irae is parodied in this movement. The sound of the funeral knell must certainly bring frightening images of one's own death to the listeners. The

predominantly Catholic French certainly would notice it right away. The Dies irae is from the Gregorian chant for the Mass for the Dead. The text for this section refers to the trembling and fear that will effect everyone at the time of Judgement. The main source of the sublime in this movement is the sheer power of it. Power is terrifying because, according to Burke, it often inflicts pain (111). Hugo Wolf was aware of this power and commented on it by calling "the orchestral effect . . . overwhelming, shattering, annihilating" (290). The listeners are frightened because through sympathy they can associate with the persona and imagine the dread of watching a dark celebration.

It is the idea of power that contributes the most to the sublime feeling of Quasimodo. Ultimately, power is the "ability to hurt," but as before, it must not directly affect the readers, or they will flee (Weiskel 93). Hugo's descriptions of the Hunchback often includes his power. Early in the novel, he explains that even "with all this deformity, there was a formidable air of strength, agility, and courage" about the Hunchback (49). When Robin Poussepain laughed in Quasimodo's face, the bell-ringer tossed him a distnce of ten paces. After that, "a circle of terror and respect" surrounded the Hunchback (Hugo 50). His strength, activity and spitefulness lead him to be feared by most people (Hugo 64). He uses his strength later in the novel to save La Esmeralda and knocks two guards away. When the girl realizes what has happened, she is "horror-stricken" by her rescuer (Hugo 285). Even the brother of the Archdeacon is "struck dumb with horror" when he sees Quasimodo crouching behind a statue (Hugo 350).

The "Project for a Cenotaph to Newton," The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, and the Symphonie Fantastique contain many of the qualities which make up Burke's sublime, but why do artists engage those characteristics? Burke says that this reaction purges the body of "troublesome incumbrance" (qtd. in Weiskel 88). This is similar to the way that Greek tragedy cleanses the soul. Ellen Moers, a modern author writing about the Gothic, which resembles the sublime in its aim to "scare at the basic level," feels that sublime does not purge emotions in the same way as tregedy, but it creates a physiological reaction which is similar to what is experienced during a time of real fear (qtd. in Thompson 6). This response is thrilling, a natural high, so to speak, and of course it is something the observers would enjoy. They get the thrill of danger without the possibility of pain or death. Witness the popularity of modern horror movies and it is evident that the appeal of the sublime is still powerful.

J. M. S. Tompkins catagorizes the Gothic as a response to "the political and religious insecurity of disturbed times" (qtd. in Thompson 4). I feel this evaluation can be applied to the sublime as well because it also intends to frighten observers. In the case of the "Cenotaph," this insecurity is uncertain. The social and political system of the Old Regime was still intact, but beginning to falter. Notice that the type of sublime it produces is slightly different from that in The Hunchback and the symphony. The "Cenotaph" is grand and shadowy, but no figure is distincly dangerous. Both The Hunchback and the symphony can

make one fear for one's life. Quasimodo frightens the reader with his obvious power and strength. The fourth movement of the symphony brings the listener to the scaffold. Both of these works are post-Revolutionary. The very real terrors of the Revolution and reign of Napoleon were a prominent part of their national consciousness and come forth in both works.

France in 1784, when Boulée was drawing the "Cenotaph," was a country on the brink of a great upheaval. Because of fiscal problems, the weaknesses of the government were becoming more and more obvious. The state was essentially bankrupt, and did not have the collection system to keep up with expenditures (Cobban 55). For example, the collection system for the salt tax was so corrupt that the price of salt varied twelve sous a livre depending on the region, and a large salt smuggling industry arose (Cobban 56). After Louis XIV, the parliaments, especially the parliament of Paris, began to undermine the respect for the monarchy and prevent reforms by becoming the center of royal opposition (Cobban 63). When Louis XVI came to power in 1774, he was only twenty and too inexperienced, and too stubborn, to deal with the troubles that his predecessors left him (Cobban 96).

Boullée's reaction was to a general air of uncertainty, not to an outright time of revolt. This affected the nature of the sublime in the "Cenotaph." It is a sublime caused by size, infinity and darkness. It is sublime because the observers do not know the extent of what surrounds them. They feel lost inside the vast representation of the universe that Boullée created. This is analogous to the uncertainty that must have

permeated France before the Revolution. It was obvious that something must happen to correct the many wrongs of society, but it was uncertain what form that correction would take. The future is always obscure, and obscurity was one of the sublime characteristics defined by Burke.

Between 1789 and 1830, events in France were themselves terrifying. They could not be called sublime because an individual's life might actually be at stake. Robespierre ruled by terror and repression of all opposing sentiments (Cobban 227). Hundreds of thousands of men died during the war-torn years of Napoleon's reign. The restoration of the Bourbon monarchy did not do much to settle the country down. In the 1820's there was much friction between the legislative Chamber and the King. When Charles X ascended to the throne in 1824, his unwillingness to compromise on what he believed to be the divinely given powers of the King insured that his tenure would be short-lived (Cobban 87). Charles' response to his opponents' 1830 electoral victory was to further restrict freedoms and to dissolve the Chamber (Cobban 90). This resulted in riots in Paris and by the end of July Charles had been ousted for the Duke of Orleans (Cobban 90).

The Hunchback and the Symphonie Fantastique were created in this air of instability when the terrors of 1789 and Napoleon were still fresh in the memory of the nation. These works were not caused by speculation about an uncertain future, but reflection upon a definite and terrifying past. Even though Hugo and Berlioz may not have experienced the events of the Revolution first hand, that knowledge was a part of the collective memory of

the people. Just as today the mention of Vietnam elicits images of violent fights in the jungles and violent protests on college campuses, even for those who were not alive at the time of the fighting, thoughts of the Revolution could evoke images of the Terror and the guillotine, and the reign of Napoleon for those living in post-Revolution France. Perhaps more importantly, Berlioz and Hugo would have experienced the revolt in 1830. As a result, the sublime in The Hunchback and the symphony utilizes a direct threat to the well-being of the observer. Quasimodo's strength evokes fear in the readers even though he is only a character on a page. Because the readers are able to sympathize with the characters in the novel who are threatened by the Hunchback, they experience the thrill of terror, without the actual danger. Through the program and the music, Berlioz's listeners are brought to the scaffold through their ability to sympathize with the persona. In both, the form that the terror takes is very similar to a prevalent sight of the terror of the Revolution--public execution. Hugo describes the pillory and the scaffold at great length, and emphasizes the popularity of these places as entertainment (177). Perhaps the most powerful part of the symphony is the point at which the axe falls. The sublime sense of danger is very definite and tangible: the Hunchback, or the scaffold, or the guillotine, because the artists had a very definite sense of danger to draw on in the recent past.

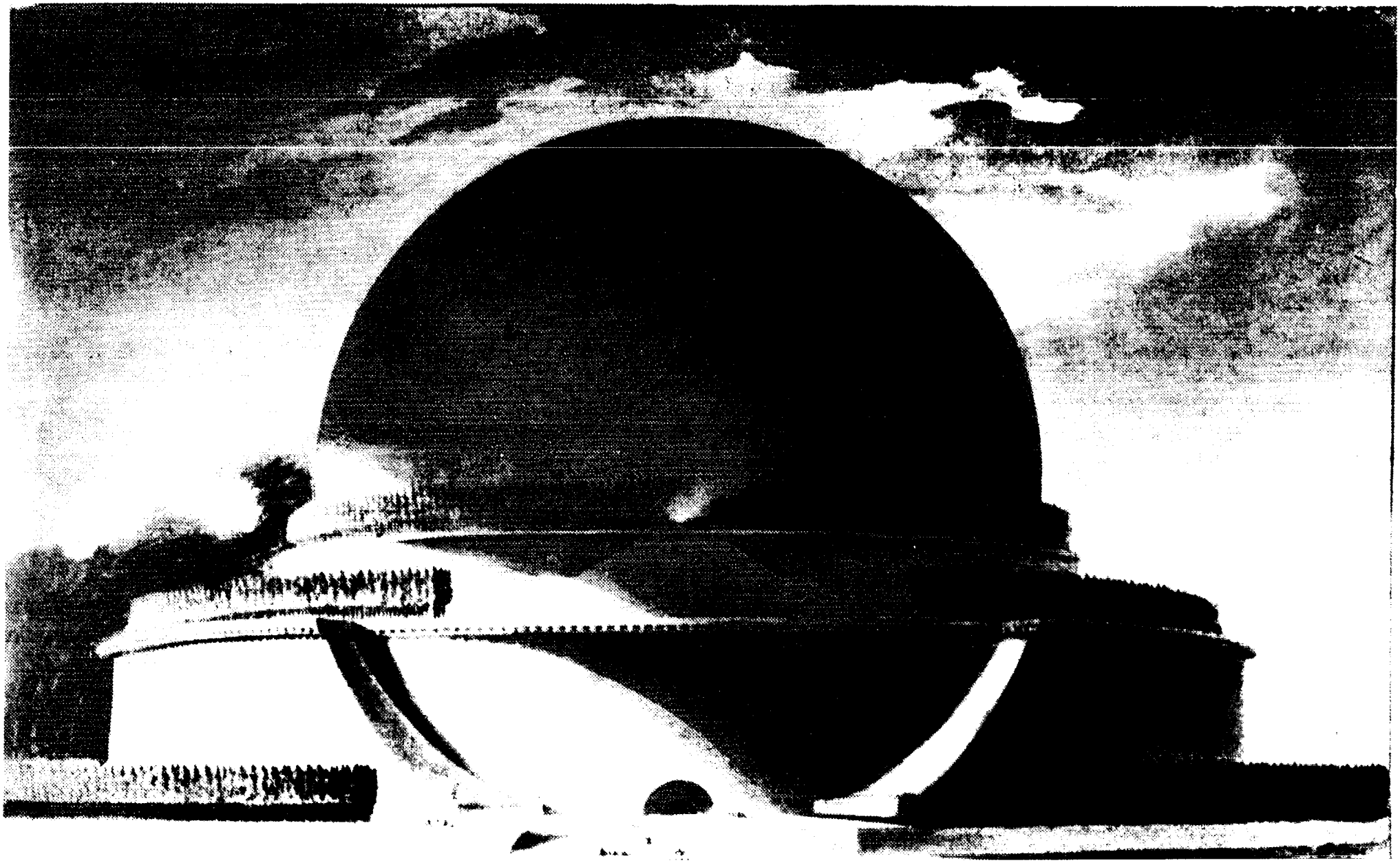
In the mid-eighteenth century, Edmund Burke noticed the power of frightening objects and carefully delineated qualities which make up the sublime in A Philosophical Enquiry into the

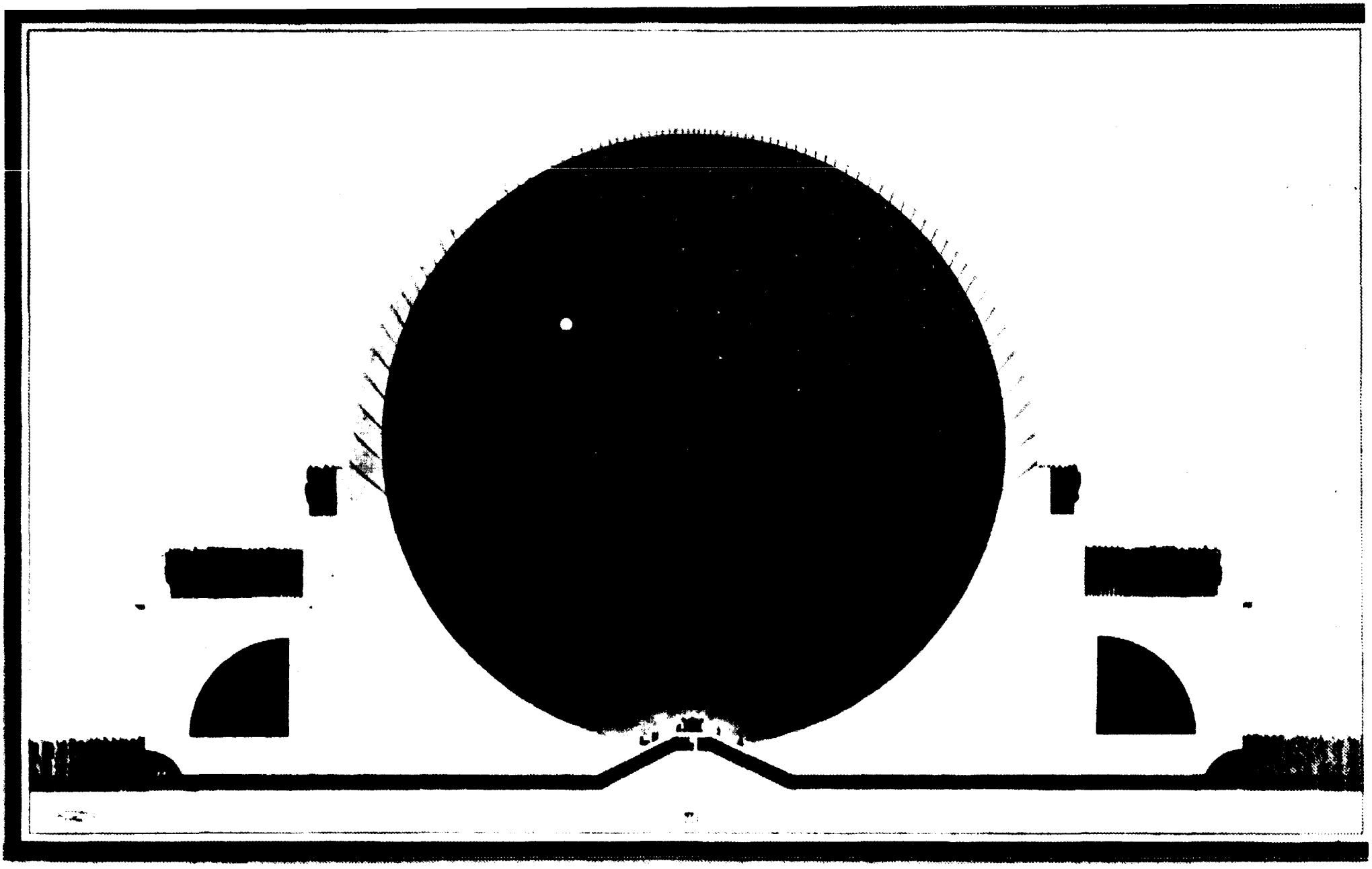
Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. Many of these qualities may be found in the works of Etienne-Louis Boullée, Hector Berlioz, and Victor Hugo, although there is a difference in the work of Boullée, who drew his "Project for a Cenotaph to Newton" before the French Revolution, and the two 1831 works: The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, and the Symphonie Fantastique. This difference may be attributed to the occurrence of real terror during the Revolution, Napoleon's reign, and the Restoration. The "Cenotaph" is great in size, very dark or very light, and the representation of a vast and unknowable universe. It is the product of a period of time in which the ancient monarchy was beginning to show its age and weakness. It was obvious that something must happen, but it was uncertain what or when. Similarly, the terror of the "Cenotaph" is created by what is unknown. The Hunchback and the Symphonie Fantastique, on the other hand, were created after approximately 40 years of strife and division within the country. The people of France knew exactly what reactions executions and other forms of terror invoked because they had become so prevalent during that period. As a result, the terror in The Hunchback and the symphony stems from direct sources: Quasimodo, the scaffold, the guillotine. "Tranquility tinged with terror" evolves from times that may be considered more terrifying than tranquil.

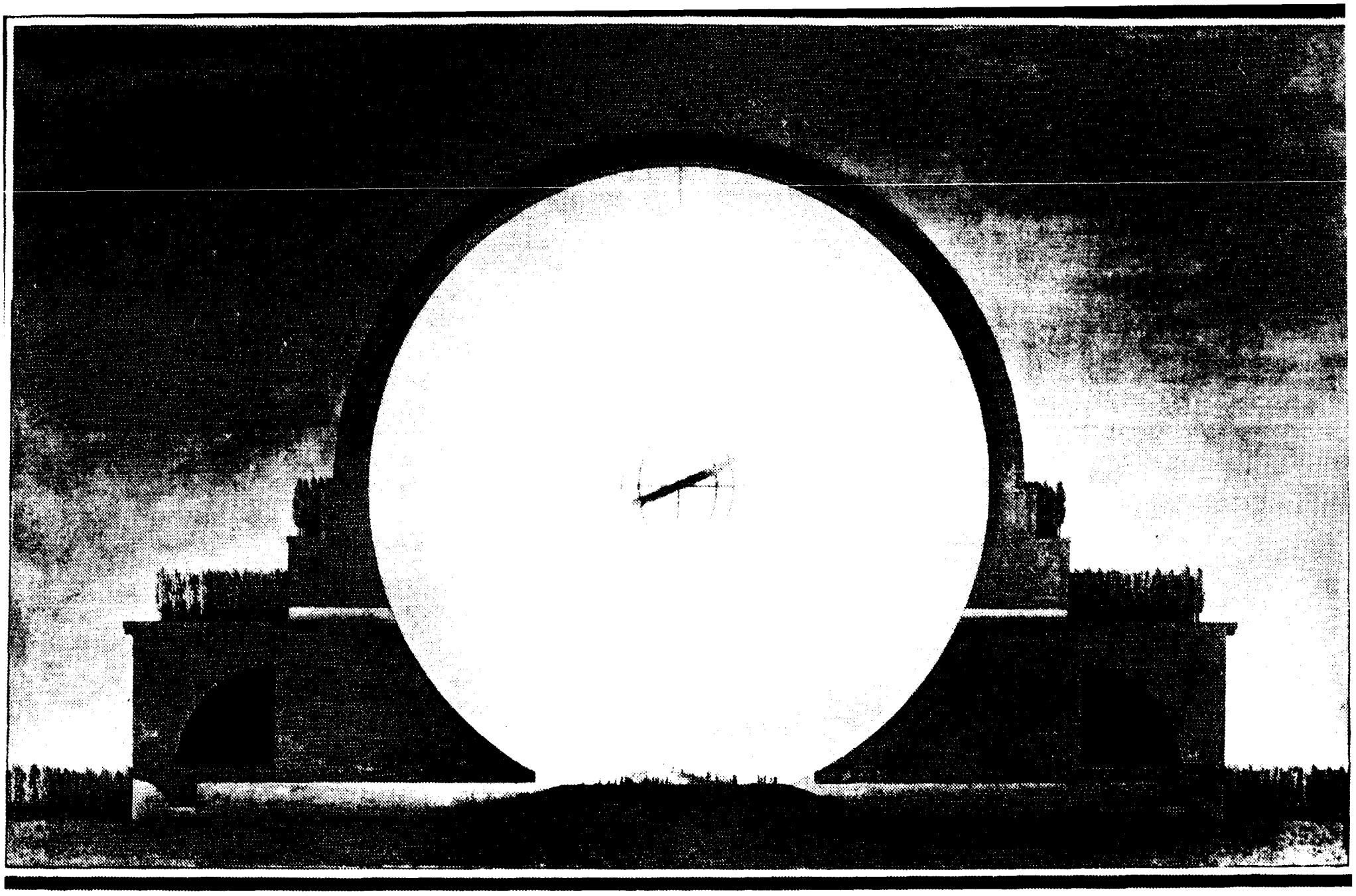
Appendix A

"Project for a Cenotaph to Newton"

(plates from De Montclos)



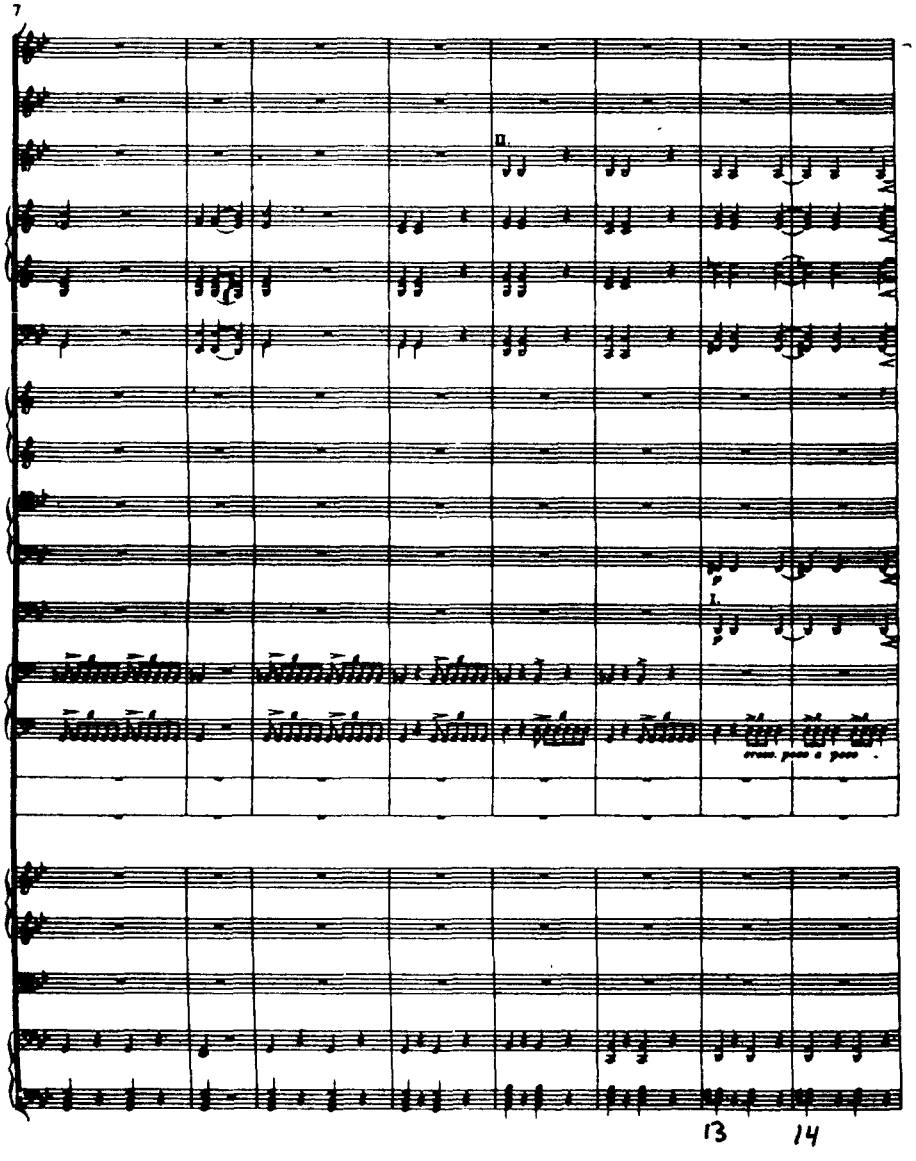




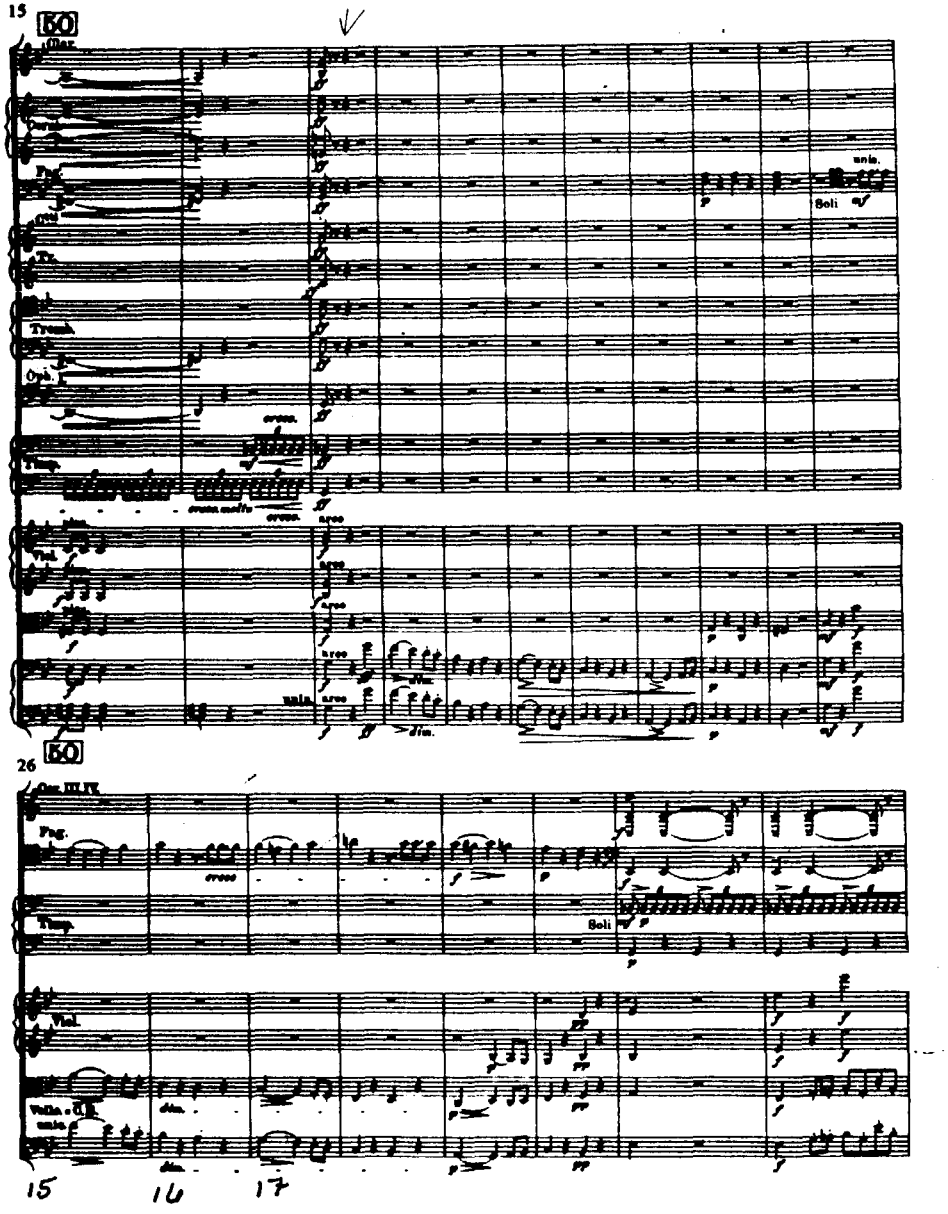
Appendix B

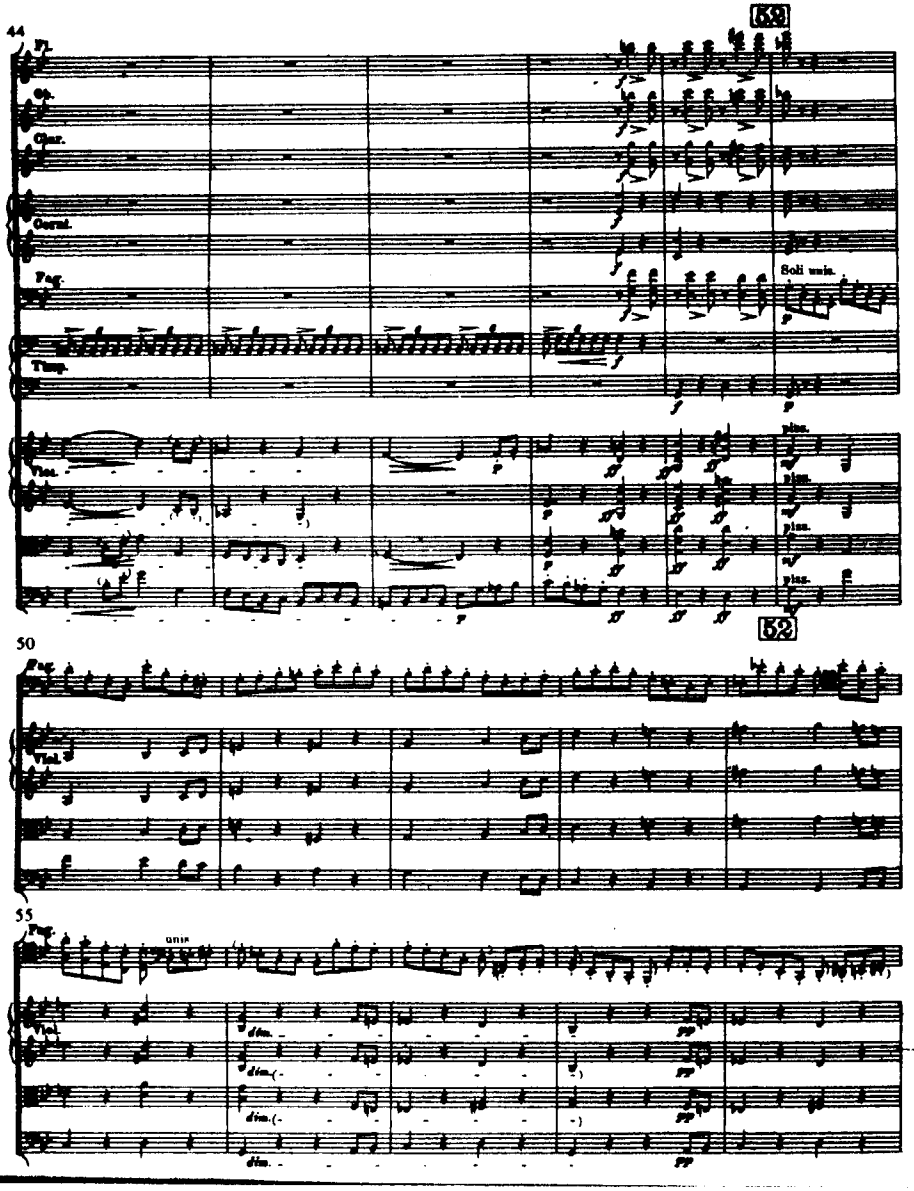
excerps from Symphonie Fantastique

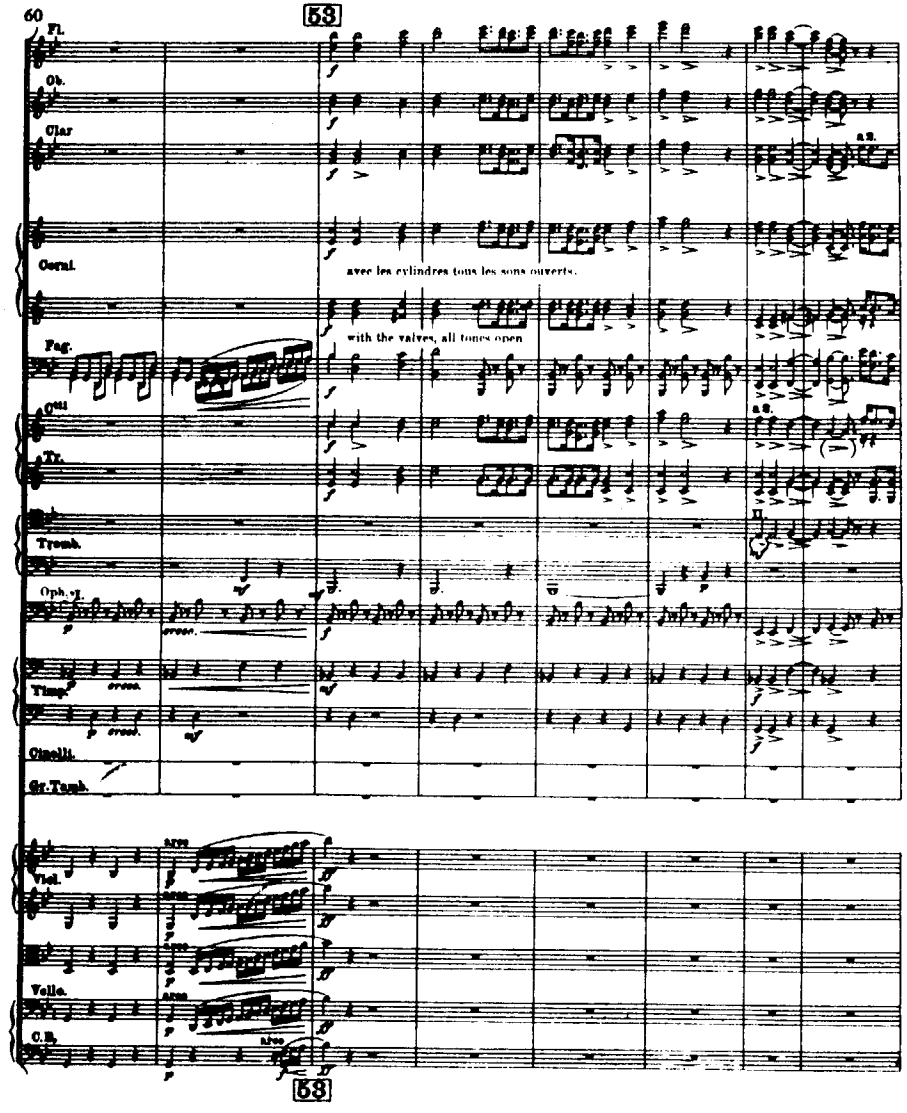
(Berlioz, Symphonie)



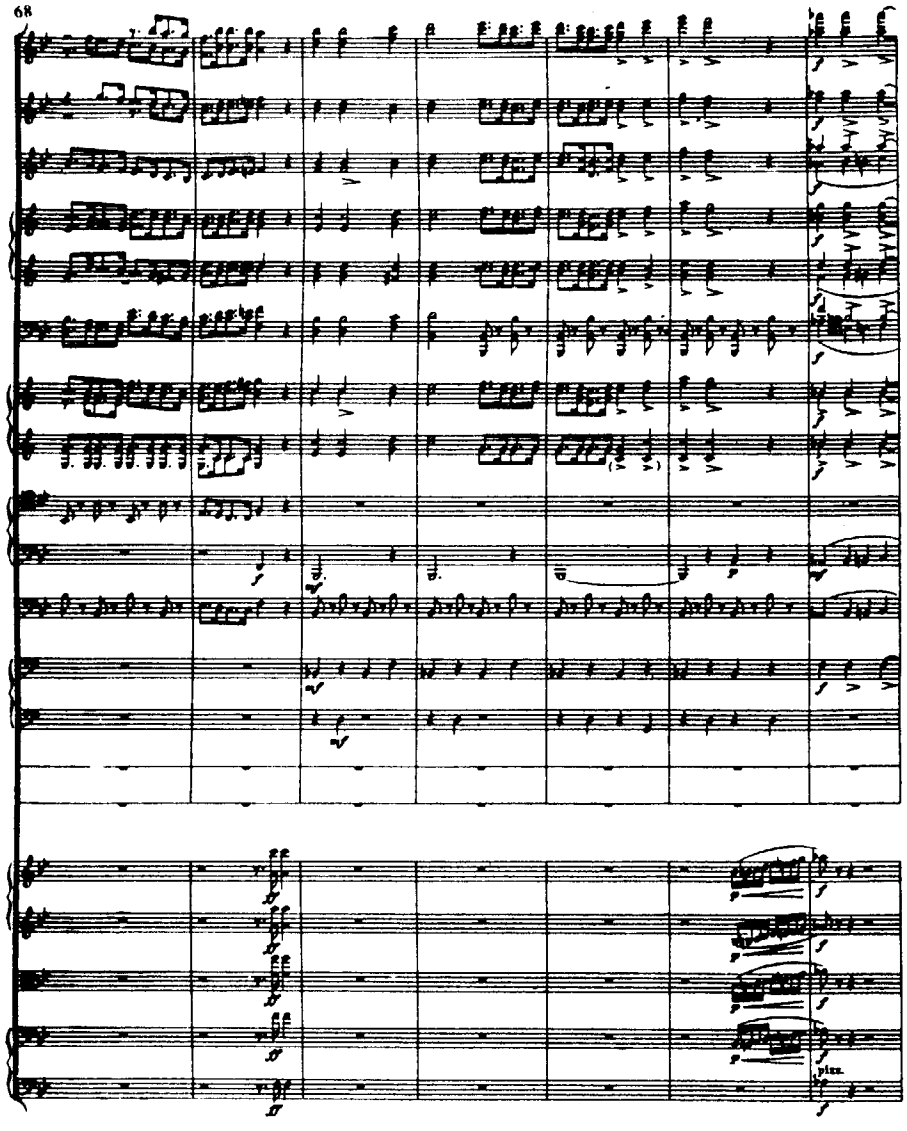
measures 15 & 16

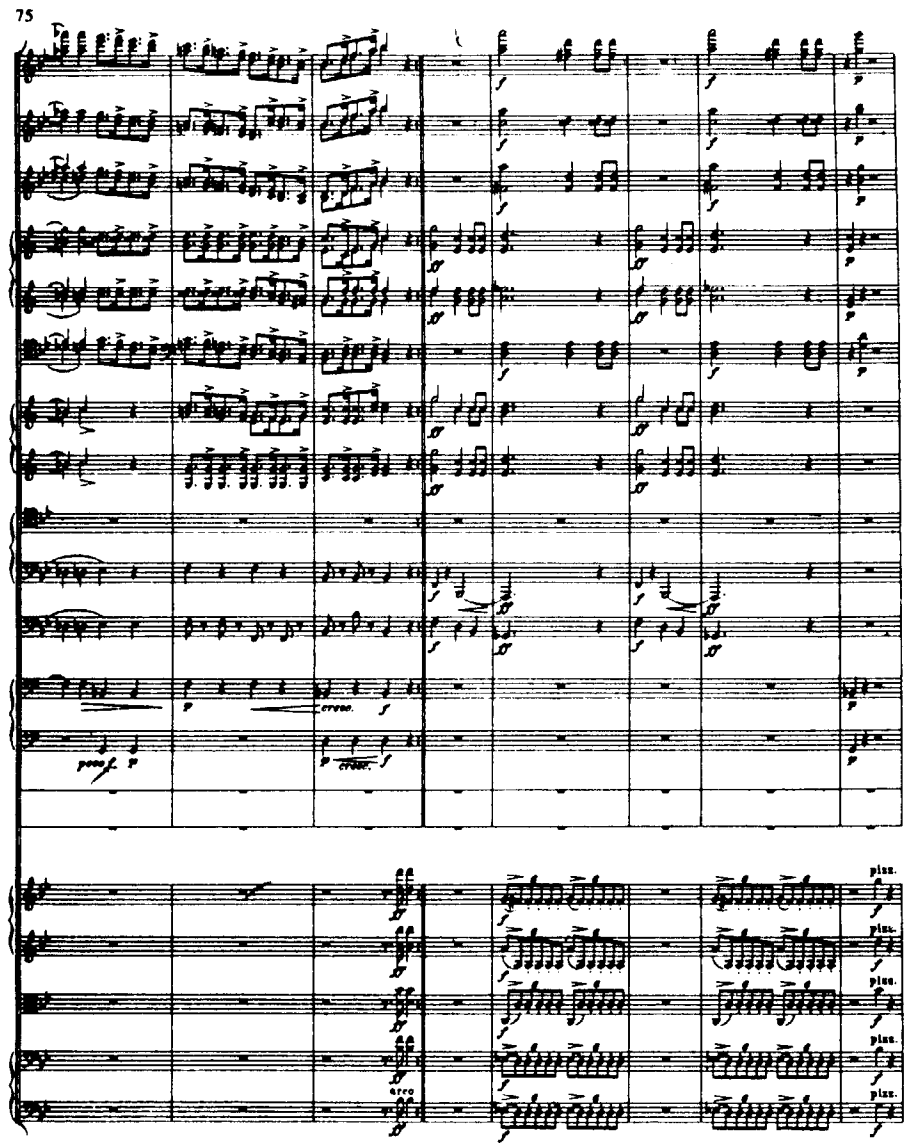



44
52
Fl.
Ob.
Clar.
Corni
Fag.
Timp.
Soli unis.
Vlns.
Vcl.
C.B.
50
Fag.
Vcl.
C.B.
52
55
Fag.
unis
Vcl.
C.B.
dim.
pp


60
53
Fl.
Ob.
Clar
Corni
avec les cylindres tous les sons ouverts.
with the valves, all tones open
Fag.
Ctti
Tr.
Tromb.
Oph. ?
Timp.
Cimelli.
Gr.Tamb.
Vcl.
Vclle.
C.B.
53

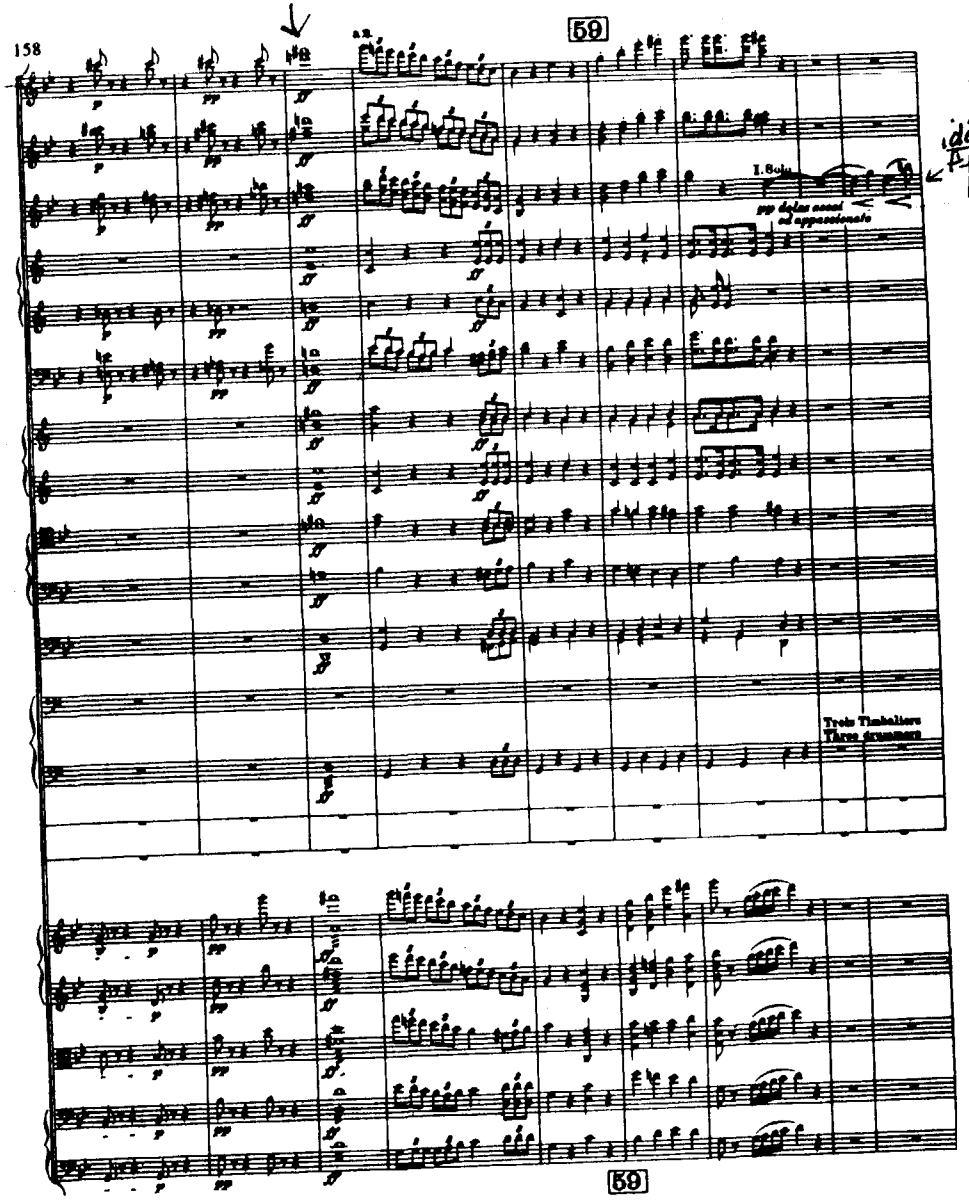
main theme





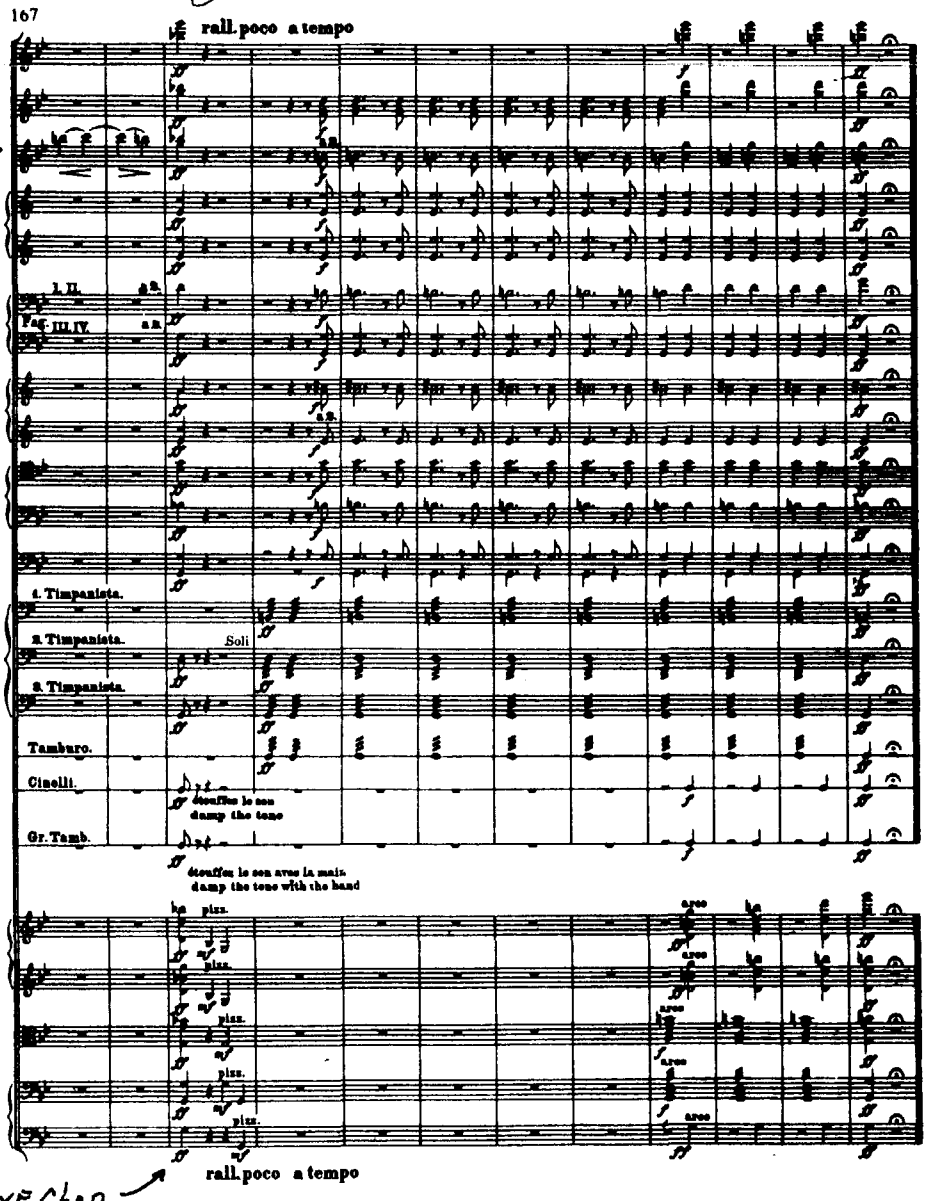
main theme (con't)

IV. Marche au Supplice

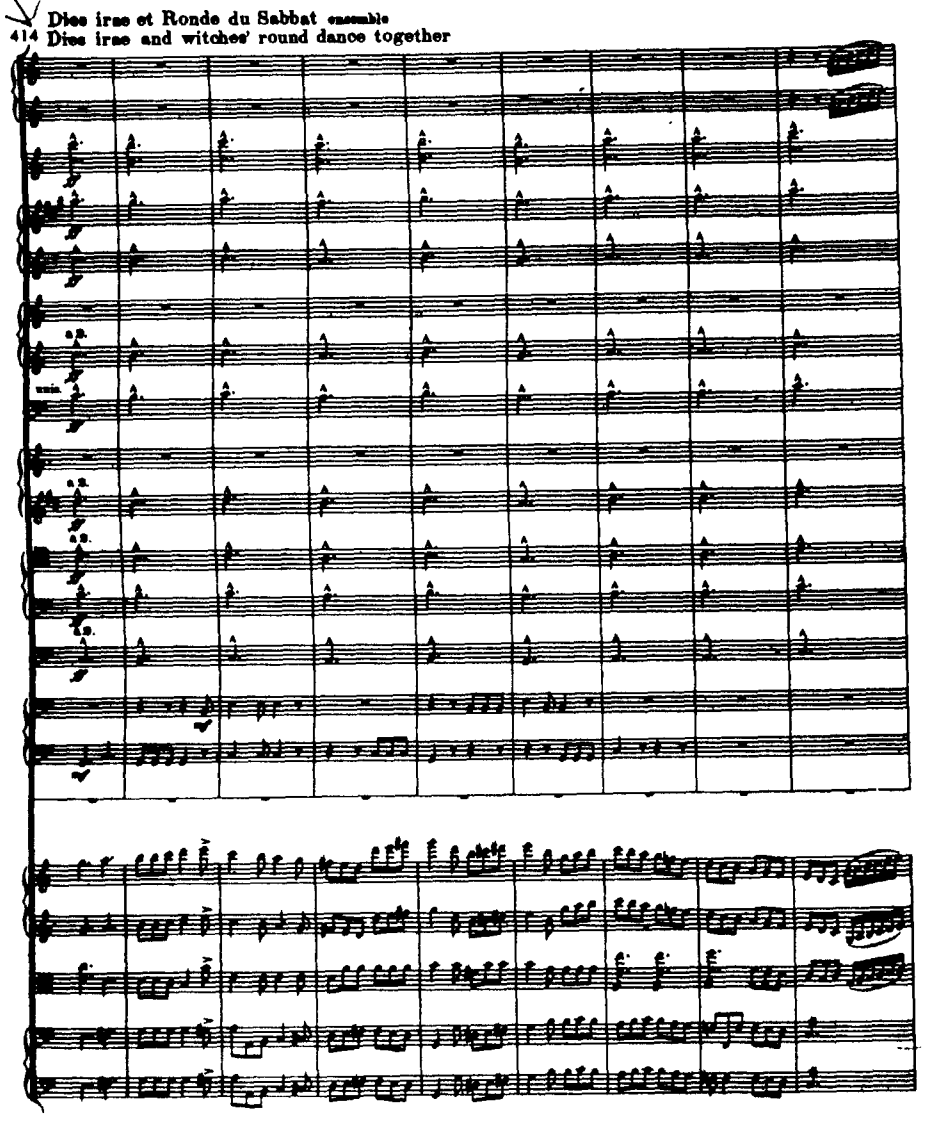


idée fixe

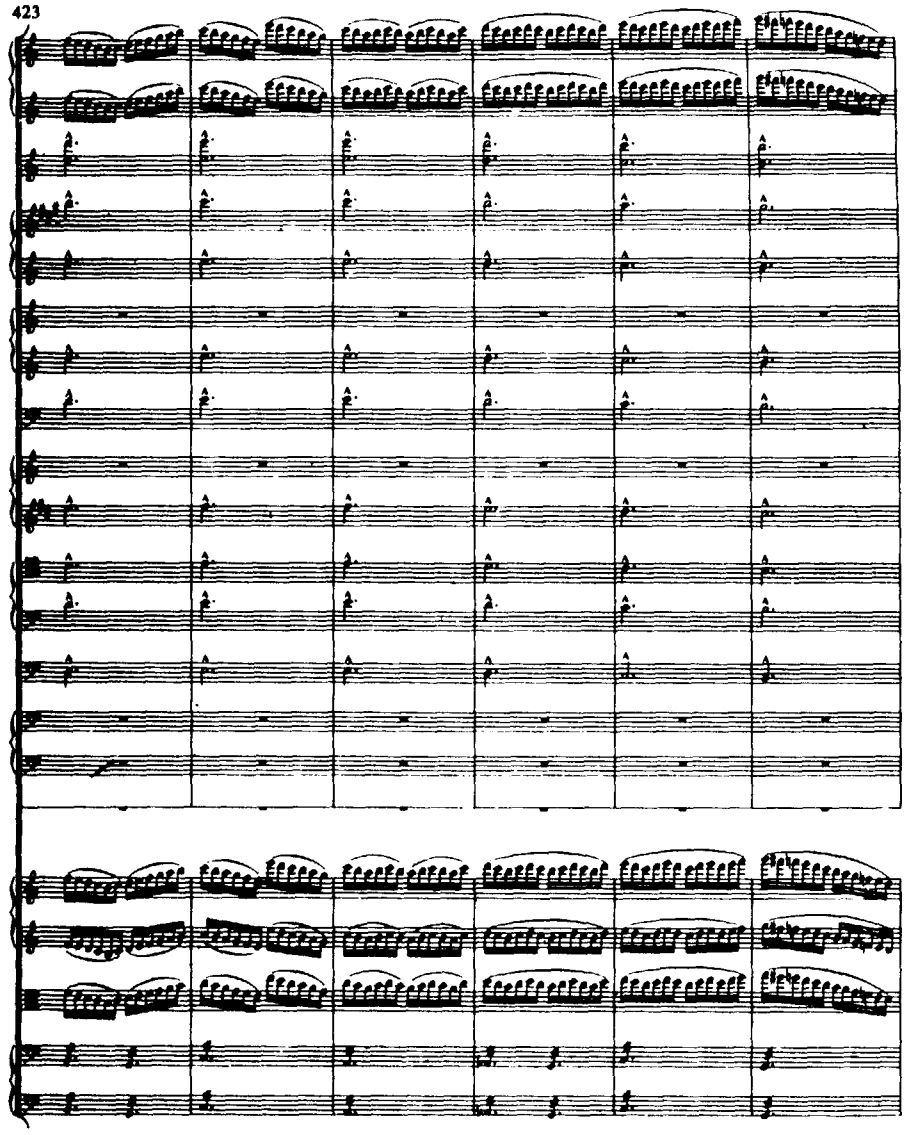
IV Marche au Supplice

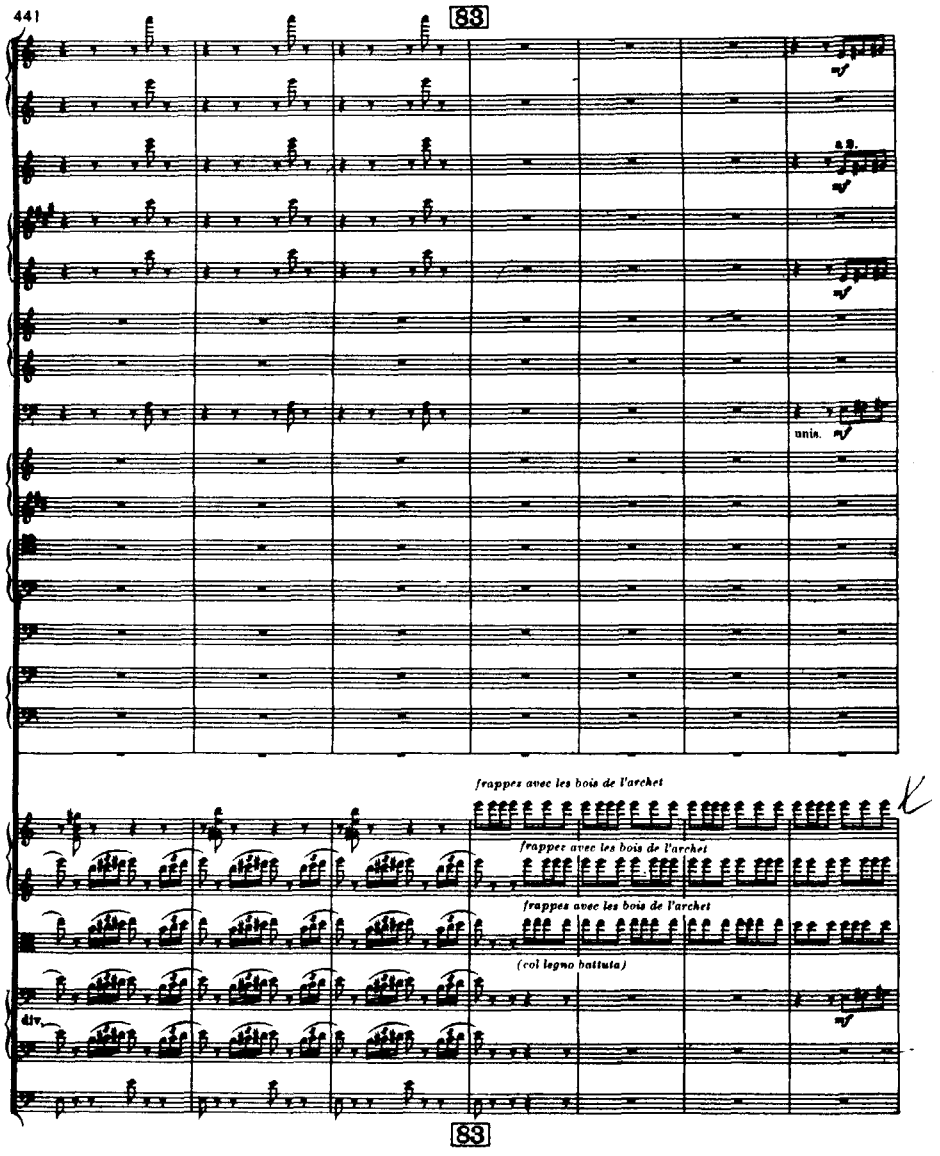


axe Chop

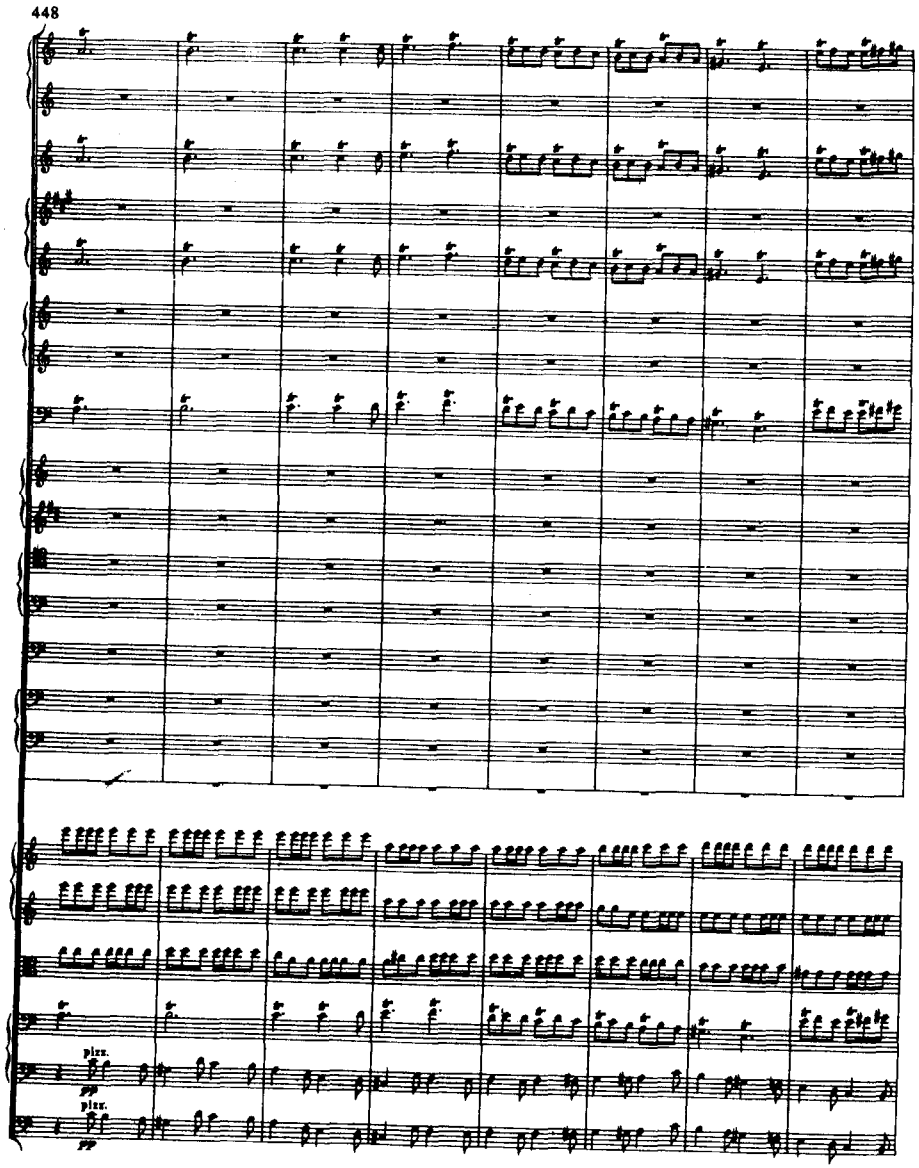


Dies irae and Witches' Round Dance





playing with the wood



Works Cited

Barzun, Jacques. Berlioz and His Century: An Introduction to the Age of Romanticism. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1956 and 1982.

---. Classic, Romantic and Modern. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1961. 6-35.

Berlioz, Hector. Symphonie Fantastique, op. 14. 1831. Cone, Fantastic 47-196. Musical score.

---. "On Imitation in Music." 1837. Trans. Jacques Barzun. Cone, Fantastic 36-46.

Braham, Allan. The Architecture of the French Enlightenment. Berkley: U of California P, 1980. 109-23.

Burke, Edmund. A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. 2nd ed. 1759. New York: Garland, 1971.

Cobban, Alfred. A History of Modern France: Old Regime and Revolution. Vol. 1. Baltimore: Penguin, 1961.

---. A History of Modern France: From the First Empire to the Fourth Republic. Vol. 2. Baltimore: Penguin, 1961.

Cone, Edward T., ed. Fantastic Symphony: An Authoritative Score, Historical Background, Analysis, Views and Comments. New York: Norton, 1971.

---. "The Symphony and the Program." Cone, Fantastic 18-35.

De Montclos, Jean-Marie Pérouse. Entienne-Louis Boullée (1728-1799): Theoretician of Revolutionary Architecture. Trans. James Emmons. New York: George Braziller, 1974.

Hugo, Victor. The Hunchback of Notre-Dame. New York: Dodd, 1947.

Liszt, Franz. "A Berlioz Concert." 1836. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 282-84.

Schumann, Robert. "A Symphony by Berlioz." 1835. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 220-48.

Thompson, G. Richard. Introduction. Romantic Gothic Tales 1790-1840. New York: Harper, 1979.

Thornburg, Mary K. Patterson. The Monster in the Mirror: Gender and the Sentimental/Gothic Myth in Frankenstein. Ann Arbor: UMI Research P, 1987.

Trachtenberg, Marvin, and Isabelle Hyman. Architecture: From Prehistory to Post-Modernism. New Jersey: Prentice, 1986. 411-423, 398-399.

Wagner, Richard. "On Berlioz and the Fantastic Symphony." 1841. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 284-87.

Weiskel, Thomas. The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976.

Wolf, Hugo. "On Berlioz and the Fantastic Symphony." 1885. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 289-93.

Works Consulted

Braham, Allan. The Architecture of the French Enlightenment. Berkley: U of California P, 1980. 109-123.

Barzun, Jacques. Berlioz and His Century: An Introduction to the Age of Romanticism. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1956 and 1982.

---. Classic, Romantic and Modern. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1961. 6-35.

Berlioz, Hector. Symphonie Fantastique, op. 14. cond. Sir Eugene Goossens. The London Symphony Orchestra. Everest, 3037, 1959.

---. Symphonie Fantastique, op. 14. cond. Daniel Barenboin. Berliner Philharmoniker. CBS Masterworks, MK#39859, 1985.

---. Symphonie Fantastique, op. 14. 1831. Cone, Fantastic 47-196. Musical score.

---. "On Imitation in Music." 1837. Trans. Jacques Barzun. Cone, Fantastic 36-46.

Braham, Allan. The Architecture of the French Enlightenment. Berkley: U of California P, 1980. 109-23.

Burke, Edmund. A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. 2nd ed. 1759. New York: Garland, 1971.

Cobban, Alfred. A History of Modern France: Old Regime and Revolution. Vol. 1. Baltimore: Penguin, 1961.

---. A History of Modern France: From the First Empire to the Fourth Republic. Vol. 2. Baltimore: Penguin, 1961.

Cone, Edward T. "The Composer and the Symphony." Cone, Fantasic 3-17.

---, ed. Fantastic Symphony: An Authoritative Score, Historical Background, Analysis, Views and Comments. New York: Norton, 1971.

---. "Schumann Amplified: An Analysis." Cone, Fantastic 249-77.

---. "The Symphony and the Program." Cone, Fantastic 18-35.

Copland, Aaron. "Berlioz Today." 1960. Cone, Fantastic 296-301.

De Montclos, Jean-Marie Pérouse. Entienne-Louis Boullée (1728-1799): Theoretician of Revolutionary Architecture. Trans. James Emmons. New York: George Braziller, 1974.

Gounod, Charles. "Berlioz." 1882. Trans. Sam Morgenstern. Cone, Fantastic 187-89.

Hauser, Arnold. The Social History of Art: Rococo, Classicism, and Romanticism. Vol. 3. New York: Random, 1985. 4 vols.

Hugo, Victor. The Hunchback of Notre-Dame. New York: Dodd, 1947.

Kerman, Joseph and Vivian Kerman. Listen. Brief Ed. New York: Worth, 1987.

Kostof, Spiro. A History of Architecture: Setting and Rituals. New York: Oxford UP, 1985.

Liszt, Franz. "A Berlioz Concert." 1836. Trans. Edward T. Cone, Fantastic 282-84.

Mendelssohn, Felix. "A Letter from Rome." 1831. Trans. Sam Morgenstern. Cone, Fantastic 281-82.

"Romanticism." The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. Ed. Stanely Sadie. 20 vols. London: Macmillan, 1980.

Saint-Saens, Camille. "The Fantastic Symphony." 1921. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 293-94.

Schumann, Robert. "A Symphony by Berlioz." 1835. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 220-48.

Thompson, G. Richard. Introduction. Romantic Gothic Tales 1790-1840. New York: Harper, 1979.

Thompson, Virgil. "The Berlioz Case." 1942. Cone, Fantastic 294-95.

Thornburg, Mary K. Patterson. The Monster in the Mirror: Gender and the Sentimental/Gothic Myth in Frankenstein. Ann Arbor: UMI Research P, 1987.

Trachtenberg, Marvin, and Isabelle Hyman. Architecture: From Prehistory to Post-Modernism. New Jersey: Prentice, 1986. 411-423, 398-399.

Vidler, Anthony. The Writing of the Walls: Architectural Theory in the Late Enlightenment. Princeton: Princeton Architectural P, 1987.

Wagner, Richard. "On Berlioz and the Fantastic Symphony." 1841. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 284-87.

Weiskel, Thomas. The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976.

Wolf, Hugo. "On Berlioz and the Fantastic Symphony." 1885. Trans. Edward T. Cone. Cone, Fantastic 289-93.